

Expanded policy horizons – benefits realised from a policy project

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The policies of a university will set its horizon as they establish the standards of governance, academic quality and management. They are the means by which a university ensures quality, mitigates risk and demonstrates compliance with its regulatory environment.

The level of organisational priority attached to policy development and review will impact the capacity to deliver, sustain quality outcomes and contribute to institutional research. The policy environment at the University of Southern Queensland has changed over time as a result of the differing levels of priority assigned to it.

The presentation will examine the legacy of these approaches. It will explore the impact of a three-year policy refresh project in redressing impacts on stakeholders at four levels: policy framework, content, system and compliance.

A reflection upon major lessons learned will identify the key role of a policy framework (the 'policy on policies') and the impact of an engaged sponsor and applied project management methodology. The critical role of deployment will also be explored.

The benefits realised will be demonstrated, including improved capability, accuracy and access and development of a modern, compliant and robust system. The ongoing need for review and monitoring will be investigated along with the role that qualitative and quantitative data has to play.

The outcomes of this project continue to impact the change agenda at the University of Southern Queensland. This paper will highlight how findings from this project can help inform change, research and policy agendas within the higher education sector more broadly.